

# It Happened to Hedderley

BY HARRISON CLARK.

Continued from Page 6.

"What I can do with a correspondence school. Latitude and longitude taught by wireless, you know! For we've got to be human once in our lives and help this young man locate himself!"

"Ain't she a brick!" said Hedderley, admiringly.

"You needn't be insulting about it," said "S-t."

"Don't joke! I'm a wreck—"

"Thought so from your sending. Try bromo—"

"Marooned."

"How interesting!"

"Darn it, listen—"

"Such a language—"

And Hedderley broke in with an apology; for he recognized the "writing" as that of a woman.

"Don't mind that; but what's your joke?"

"Won't you understand I'm shipwrecked—"

"How long do you expect to remain where you are?"

"The rest of my life if I can't get you to take this thing seriously."

"Oh, by the way—where are you?"

"In a dinky rock-bound cozy corner in the middle of the ocean somewhere."

"But what part of the ocean?"

"How the—"

"How do you expect me to know, when there isn't a sign on the station and no time card—"

"Ask some one—"

"Nobody to ask."

"On shore—"

"Nobody on shore—no anything on shore."

"What's your latitude and longitude?"

"Haven't a sign of either! Seriously, I don't know."

"Can't you take a reckoning?"

"Certainly not! Why, I'm from Amarillo!"

"Why did you leave?"

"I can't remember. Isn't that funny?"

"Seriously, who are you and where are you? My curiosity is aroused."

"I am serious! I'm in dead earnest! And I want help!"

"But how can we get to you?"

"I wish I knew. But—I don't!"

"How did it happen?"

"I was seasick—didn't want to live—crew and passengers left me when they thought the ship was gone. Then when the ship didn't either burn or sink, the ocean got mad, picked up ship, dog and all, and pitched us into this place."

"Beat that, will you?" tickled the man.

"When did this happen?" asked the woman.

"About— By the way, when is now?"

"Thursday."

"This week, last week or next week?"

"You are silly!"

"But it isn't as silly as you may think! You see, I was plumb batty for—If it's this week, it must have been three days. Then we floated a day, and we've been here three days. Say, please come and get me. And Bo!"

"But—why don't you tell us how to come?"

"Can't you tell where this line runs?"

"What?"

"O— That was silly, wasn't it? You see, out at Amarillo we have wires— By the way, won't you tell me who you are?"

"Certainly," said the woman. "I am 'S-t' on the yacht Sylva, off Eleuthera Island."

"And the man—"

"Oh, he's— You may call him Jimmy, and he's on a dinky catboat—"

"I am Mr. James K. Adderton, owner and skipper of the yacht Linette," interrupted the man. "And I'm out here off Crooked Island; and—"

"That's enough, Jimmy; be good!" tickled "S-t."

"Delighted!" sparkled Hedderley. "And where are those islands?"

No reply came.

"My map shows the Bahamas, the Canaries and the Aleutians," he continued; "are they in any of those bunches?"

"Get a searchlight," wrote "S-t," "and look for them in the Bahamas."

"Well, where does that put me?" Hedderley asked.

"Up in the air," said Jimmy.

"Not after that jolt," retorted Hedderley. "Say, don't you think it's rather unfair to string a man who is shipwrecked and alone?"

"Stringing? Stringing, did you say?" demanded Jimmy. "Why, if I sent a tale like yours tick-taking through the atmosphere I'd be proud of myself as the champion string artist of the world."

"Oh, don't be so hard on a fellow! I give you my word I'm telling you the truth!"

"Why—why—" said the astounded Hedderley.

"Don't mind," interrupted Jimmy. "A view of her beautiful hair might explain."

"S-t" was earnest in her teaching, and Hedderley was stupendously earnest in his efforts to understand. He worked hard with the compass, and came in time to have a reasonable faith in the needle—though it was hard for

him to believe at all times that north was where it was declared to be. He watched and measured shadows, and gave minute reports of what he found. He squinted at stars until he acquired a chronic crick in his neck. And "S-t" recorded and corrected and reckoned from the queer mass that Hedderley gave, and put creases into her brow with her study of the chart. Every day Hedderley would ask: "Have you heard from Jimmy?" And just as regularly she would reply: "Don't be impatient. Study your lesson!" A week tottered by feverishly, and Hedderley felt that he was learning. "S-t" confided that his reports had enabled her to locate him definitely between Newfoundland and the Caribbean sea, but each succeeding report moved him a thousand miles or so, until the seventh day. She was surprised on that day to find him very near the spot he was reported from the day before.

"But I don't see how you can be there," she said. "There isn't so much as a rock charted within 300 miles of that place."

"The question," he said feelingly, "is whether you believe me or that chart."

The eighth and ninth days Hedderley's reports showed him stationary; and in the course of the ninth day "S-t" announced very firmly:

"I'm going to steer for that place, chart or no chart. And if I don't find you there I'll know it's all a fake and you have been joshing us to a finish."

"I'm starting out to find you," announced "S-t" next morning, not without a trace of excitement. "So please say your lesson. And do be careful and try to stay in the same place until I get there."

The excited Hedderley made his observations with painful care, and reported them anxiously. And every half hour afterward he sought confirmation of them. He heard nothing further from "S-t," however, until noon, when she reported:

"I am within fifty miles of where you ought to be. Please see if you are stationary."

And Hedderley made another observation and another report—and from the same place!

"I guess there is no doubt now that you have alighted," said "S-t."

"What sort of signal have you flying?"

"Why, none!" said Hedderley.

"Run up a flag—"

"Nothing to run it up with."

"Climb a mast and nail a shirt on it!"

"If I don't get out of here until I climb one of those masts, my tombstone will be built right here," flashed back Hedderley.

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"It's all new to me—I haven't an idea— Say, how would smoke do?"

"Fine!"

He dashed for the furnace room, and presently a black column was rising straight and ominous from one of the ship's funnels—lifting its spreading head high above the surrounding cliffs.

"At 2 o'clock 'S-t' called:

"The lookout sees smoke," she reported.

Hedderley gave an Amarillo salute, and threw a chair against the side of the room as an expression of exuberance.

"But it isn't your smoke," resumed "S-t" a few moments later; "it is a steamer outward bound."

"I'll make more smoke," declared Hedderley, and he hurried into the furnace room.

When he returned, the telegraph key was rattling crazily.

"It must be you," "S-t" was writing.

"Wiggle your smoke!"

"How?"

"Water—"

And Hedderley hurried back to the furnace and began dashing buckets of water, at intervals, into the fire.

"It is—it is!" the key was crying when he got back.

"Where am I?" he asked.

"About twenty knots south-southeast, and I'm coming eighteen an hour! Keep your smoke going; I don't want to slip by that dinky cyclone cellar of yours."

"Where's Jimmy?" demanded Hedderley.

"He's safe enough, I suppose—he doesn't lose himself."

"But what does he report from my girl?"

"Bother your girl! She is with the ninety-nine—the lost sheep is the one we are after!"

"Send up some smoke yourself," begged Hedderley. "It is as if I were at the bottom of a well with a circus parade coming along."

"We are stretching our smoke in a streak across the ocean."

"Well, please shoot a gun or make a noise like something."

After awhile "S-t" asked: "Did you hear that?"

"What?"

"Why, we're shooting everything we've got—"

"I don't hear a thing but the boom-boom of the blamed old waves. But wait—hold on— Bo hears something! He's got his ears cocked—he's sniffing—whimper— Say, you ought to hear that dog howl! And see him scuffle up on deck! I guess we hear you!"

"It must be your island," came the report a few minutes later.

"No one else has claimed it," retorted Hedderley. And then excitedly: "Do you mean you see it?"

"I think I do! Smoke up!"

When he got back from the furnace, the instrument was crying merrily: "Get on deck! Get on deck!"

And Hedderley, urging legs that were trying to buckle under him, hurried up. His head was swimming and his eyes blurred in the strong sunlight. He looked off toward the open sea, through the heel of the horseshoe—and his legs began to do a hornpipe, and his head ceased to swim and his eyes cleared; and his unused voice roared out a tremendous shout.

For off through the opening he could see the white sails of a yacht, and the white point of her hull and the white dress of the people on deck—and the white handkerchiefs they were waving!

When Hedderley's delirium passed he found himself hugging Bo to his breast, whirling about the deck in a dance that was partly Dervish waltz and the other part royal high-kicking ballet, and trying to persuade his wearied voice to yield another yell. His heart was beating wildly—so wildly that it hurt him; and his throat was dry, and his mouth was dry; and his face was fixed in a hard, painful grin that he could not alter. And when he saw a white streak draw away from the yacht, and recognized it as a gasoline launch headed for his port, he began to talk to himself.

The little boat drew carefully to the reef, and with painful slowness crawled along a channel which its pilot discovered for himself—past the ugly pointed rocks, past the churning water— And then with many toots of its air horn it shot forward for a joyous dash across the bay!

The little launch came alongside; and when Hedderley could not solve the problem of lowering the ship's ladder a nimble sailor scrambled up the Isinglass' side to do it for him.

And up the ladder came a girl—in white, and with a white veil; and Hedderley, choking with gratitude to the clever "S-t," started down the steps to meet her. But the sailor drew him back and the best he could do was to stand at the top and hold out both hands.

The young woman advanced eagerly—and with utter disregard for the outstretched hands threw both arms about Hedderley's neck and cried, "Oh, Jiggsey!"

"Why—why—why—why," stammered Hedderley. "It's Amelia!" he roared.

He lifted the veil—

Later on he asked: "How did you get here?"

"When Mr. Adderton wired me I made him wait at Miami until my train could reach there," she laughed, and then I joined the searching party."

"You careless young man," said a laughing voice which Hedderley recognized as belonging to an athletic-looking young woman who had come

aboard. "Please do be more careful next time you lose yourself, and choose an island more easily accessible to heroic rescuers!"

"S-t," cried Hedderley; and this time his two outstretched hands were grasped.

"But you mustn't forget Jimmy," declared "S-t."

"Mr. Adderton, at your service," said a little man who stepped forward. "And Mr. Hedderley, permit me formally to introduce my wife—whose 'call' is 'S-t'!"

"And this," said the laughing "S-t" as a jolly-looking man, holding a book under his arm, came on board—"this is the Reverend James Thornton Eberly."

And Amelia, blushing, fled from Jiggsey and took shelter beside "S-t," she continued: "I had Jimmy pick him up at Miami; for I thought maybe you would not want to postpone the wedding, and this is the 27th, I believe."

It was after the ceremony and the wedding party was very merry in the saloon. There had been the jolliest sort of luncheon, and there had followed an enthusiastic pounding of the piano and a joyous shouting of ragtime, and Mrs. Jimmy had remarked that it was time to be getting aboard the yacht—when Amelia did a most surprising thing. She stepped behind Jiggsey's chair, and

put her arms around his neck and her chin in his hair.

"I—I—would you mind if we didn't join you until you start back from Havana?" she asked Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy. "You see," she continued as her gaze dropped before the startled stare of her friends and she began to twist Jiggsey's curls—"I—I thing it would be rather nice to have a honeymoon on a stranded ship—all alone—just us—and Bo!"

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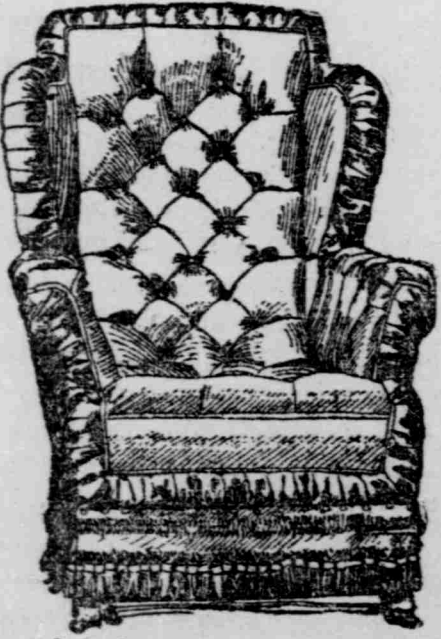
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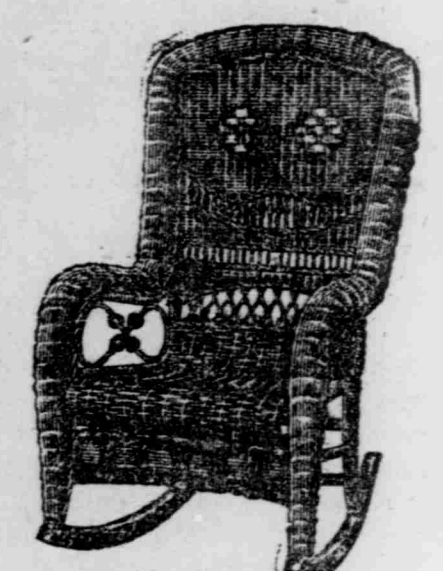


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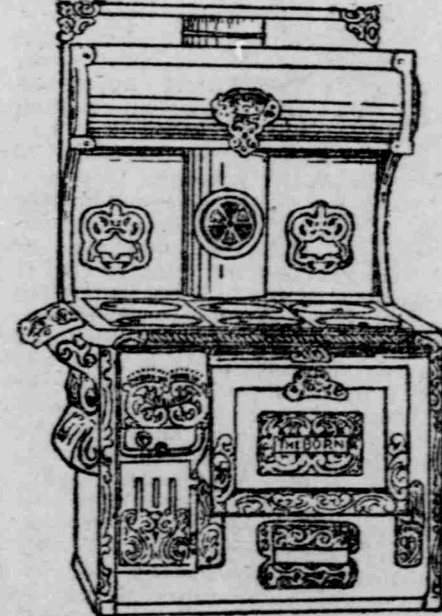


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